

upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 64) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 64

Whereas Ireland has a long and tragic history of civil conflict that has left a deep and profound legacy of suffering;

Whereas since 1969 more than 3,200 people have died and thousands more have been injured as a result of political violence in Northern Ireland;

Whereas a series of efforts by the Governments of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom to facilitate peace and an announced cessation of hostilities created an historic opportunity for a negotiated peace;

Whereas in June 1996, for the first time since the partition of Ireland in 1922, representatives elected from political parties in Northern Ireland pledged to adhere to the principles of nonviolence and commenced talks regarding the future of Northern Ireland;

Whereas the talks greatly intensified in the spring of 1998 under the chairmanship of former United States Senator George Mitchell;

Whereas the active participation of British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern was critical to the success of the talks;

Whereas on Good Friday, April 10, 1998, the parties to the negotiations each made honorable compromises to conclude a peace agreement for Northern Ireland, which has become known as the Good Friday Peace Agreement;

Whereas on Friday, May 22, 1998, an overwhelming majority of voters in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland approved by referendum the Good Friday Peace Agreement;

Whereas the United States must remain involved politically and economically to ensure the long-term success of the Good Friday Peace Agreement; and

Whereas April 10, 1999, marks the first anniversary of the Good Friday Peace Agreement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historic significance of the first anniversary of the Good Friday Peace Agreement;

(2) salutes British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern and the elected representatives of the political parties in Northern Ireland for creating the opportunity for a negotiated peace;

(3) commends former Senator George Mitchell for his leadership on behalf of the United States in guiding the parties toward peace;

(4) congratulates the people of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland for their courageous commitment to work together in peace;

(5) reaffirms the bonds of friendship and cooperation that exist between the United States and the Governments of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, which ensure that the United States and those Governments will continue as partners in peace; and

(6) encourages all parties to move forward to implement the Good Friday Peace Agreement.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I have a series of items I need to go

through and a discussion I want to have, but I understand the Senator from Michigan has some comments to make, so I yield the floor to the Senator from Michigan.

TOBACCO RECOUPMENT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Kansas. I wanted to just briefly speak in relationship to the Harkin-Specter amendment with regard to the tobacco recoupment issue and the issue of exactly what should happen to the funds that the States are now entitled to receive as a result of the legal settlement that was achieved between 46 States and the tobacco companies.

Mr. President, this, to me, should be a pretty clear-cut result. The States entered into this litigation. They did all the work. They made the case persuasively. They were finally able to prevail on the merits, in terms of convincing the other side to engage in a settlement. So, for those reasons, it does not seem to me to be particularly difficult to conclude that the benefits, the proceeds, the settlement moneys ought to go to the States. I believe, since the States did this on their own and since the States are certainly quite knowledgeable about the needs of their constituents, that we should allow them not only to be the recipients of those funds but we should give them the discretion to make the decisions that are necessary as to what priorities to set in spending those dollars.

Let me just begin briefly with the basic case itself. The States joined together. The Federal Government did not play a role in the technical sense, or as a party to the proceedings. Indeed, in his State of the Union Address the President even indicated he was directing the Department of Justice and the Attorney General to bring a separate litigation on behalf of the people of the United States against the tobacco companies. Presumably, one would not bring that case if one did not think that the States' decisions were separate from any kind of Federal component.

Once the States won, of course, money became available. Unfortunately, at that point the Federal Government, through the Health Care Finance Administration, is attempting to intercede in the President's budget to a very substantial degree, trying to wrest control of a substantial portion of those dollars. As I recall, roughly 60 percent of the first 5 years' revenues to the States which, under the President's budget, would, instead, be diverted to Washington. The basis for their claim is, in my judgment, a weak one, predicated on the argument that Medicaid overpayments are to be returned to the States. This is not a Medicaid overpayment from the Federal Government. This is a settlement between the States and these tobacco companies, a settlement fairly reached and a settlement based on the States' belief that

their citizens had been in some ways the victims of the illnesses relating to tobacco.

That said, we have now moved to a slightly different stage. In the content of this supplemental appropriation bill is language which would make it absolutely and explicitly clear that the States will receive these dollars. Now, we have before us an amendment that says: OK, if the States are going to get the money they still have to spend it on the priorities set by bureaucrats in Washington. Indeed, it is my understanding that the proposed amendment would essentially place the Secretary of Health and Human Services in a position to determine what programs qualify for, and whether States are in compliance with, these Federal mandates for 25 years. Basically, what this amendment says is approximately 50 percent, 50 percent of the settlement moneys have to be spent the way Washington dictates, and that the Secretary of Health and Human Services will decide not only what that dictation means but whether the States have done it. The States will be required to engage in extensive recordkeeping and an annual process of appealing for approval, the same kind of bureaucratic redtape that costs money and complicates, in my judgment, far too many things we do already.

If the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and it's not just this Secretary but any Secretary over the next quarter of a century, doesn't agree with the States, they can then veto, in effect, the States' expenditures costing the States as much as approximately \$123 billion during that time.

The bottom line is, I think, a fairly simple one. Who knows best what the needs of the States are, the States themselves or bureaucrats in the Department of Health and Human Services? I believe the States do. I think we can trust the States to make the right decisions as to how to spend the moneys derived from the tobacco settlements. That is assuming, of course, that we have any right to tell them in the first place. I do not even acknowledge that. But assuming there even was a right of the Federal Government in some respect, I just cannot imagine why anybody here in Washington is going to do a better job than people at the State level in making these judgments.

The priorities that have been set which relate to such things as counteradvertising or youth awareness or public health priorities, are priorities virtually every State has already set for themselves. Many of the States, including I believe my own, have done great things along the way to try to discourage smoking by young people and to address public health needs. If they have done that well, the notion that they now have to spend new moneys recouped through this settlement on these programs at least in my judgment would be a grievous error.

So it comes back to something we talk about a lot around here: Who

should set priorities and who knows best? In my view, the people at the local and State level, on issues and problems like this, do know best. They ought to make the decisions as to how the money, which was rightfully won by them in these lawsuits, ought to be spent. And we in Washington ought to be happy that there is going to be an abundance of resources going to the States to address the top priorities of those States.

The notion that we have to dictate how 50 percent or even 30 percent or 10 percent of these dollars have to be spent, I think both, A, incorrectly presumes that somehow we had a stake in the lawsuit and, B, that, somehow we know better. I believe it has been proven time after time that we do not know better, particularly in these types of matters which obviously have peculiarities that differ from State to State.

So, for those reasons I rise in opposition to the amendment. I look forward to working with the Senator from Texas and with a variety of other Senators who have been working together as cosponsors of the legislation that is included in the supplemental appropriation bill, to make sure that first and foremost the States get access to all the money won in the settlements and that, second, the States have the right to make the decisions as to how to spend those dollars.

So, Mr. President, I hope we will be successful in preventing agreement to this amendment. I look forward to working on this until it is completed.

I yield the floor.

REPORT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY TRAINING AND GENDER-RELATED ISSUES

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I want to make note of a report that came out today that is one, I think, we are going to be seeing and hearing quite a bit more about in the U.S. Senate. It was a report of the Congressional Commission on Military Training and Gender-Related Issues.

I rise today to briefly comment on the status of the report and the testimony that was submitted today by the members of the Congressional Commission on Military Training and Gender-Related Issues, a hearing that took place in the House Armed Services Committee. While not the final report of this commission, the initial report does give indications as to their findings and, I think, warrants some discussion in the U.S. Senate.

A number of Members will recall, last year we had a spirited discussion about gender-integrated barracks during basic training. The discussion was centered around issues of, is this the most effective way to train our young men and women in the services, to have gender-integrated barracks? These are young men and women just entering into the military. They are going through basic training. There are a lot

of difficult issues that they are facing, as they are being trained into a fighting force. Then on top of that, we put them in the same barracks together at night, after they have been side by side during the day. Ask yourself, are you going to be asking for problems if you have got young men and women who are put into the same barracks, right after a long day, next to each other with not a lot of other diversions at night?

We have had, unfortunately, a report of many instances of sexual harassment that have taken place, and worse, in these gender-integrated barracks. I am not speaking about basic training. I am talking about the barracks.

The report that came out today notes some progress in improving that sexual harassment and other problems that we have experienced with gender-integrated barracks during basic training, but it still invites the question of, why do we even ask for any problems at all? They are saying, the problem level is down, but why are we asking for problems at all by having these integrated barracks during basic training? Why don't we separate the genders during basic training? That was the point that a number of us made last year. A lot of people thought, let's put it off until this report. The report notes we have some progress, but we still have problems.

I think this hearing that was held today and the preliminary report that was issued merit a full hearing taking place in the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee to review this very issue. Is this the best way? Is this the right way, and is this the way that is leading to more problems than we need to confront of the current policy of integrating the sexes in their barracks during basic training?

I think not. We will continue to have problems we just do not need to invite. I hope that the Senate will take this on as a serious problem as we start to deal with the report that comes out today.

AMTRAK "CITY OF NEW ORLEANS" DERAILMENT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, millions of Americans awoke yesterday to the tragic news of the derailment of the Amtrak "City of New Orleans" passenger train in Bourbonnais, Illinois. Late Monday night, the train, bound for New Orleans from Chicago, struck a tractor trailer at a highway/railroad crossing, throwing the two locomotives and 11 of the 14 cars off the tracks. More than 100 of the 196 passengers, 18 crew members, and two off-duty Amtrak employees were injured. At least eleven passengers were killed, including three Mississippians.

Both Tricia and I are keeping the families of the victims of this terrible tragedy in our prayers, especially the Bonnin and Lipscomb families of DeSoto County, Mississippi. June Bonnin of Nesbit, Mississippi was diagnosed with what doctors described as

incurable cancer five years ago. However, her strong faith in God kept her going and inspired others around her. She and her granddaughter, Jessica Tickle of Memphis, Tennessee, are in God's hands now, and her daughter Ashley was severely injured. Rainey and Lacey Lipscomb, two young sisters from Lake Cormorant, Mississippi, also perished in this crash. We grieve with these families for their loss.

Mr. President, a group of students and adults from Clinton High School and Covenant Christian School in Clinton, Mississippi riding that train were returning to Mississippi after a spring-break ski trip. These young teenagers were jolted into a nightmare situation as some of the train's locomotives and cars overturned, split open, and caught fire.

I want to recognize the reactions of two of those students during this catastrophe. Clinton High School students Michael Freeman and Caleb McNair quickly recovered from the initial shock of this crash and went to the aid of their fellow students and passengers. The Jackson, Mississippi newspaper reported today that Michael located an escape route through a side window, which was now at the top of their overturned passenger coach, built a ladder from broken seats, climbed out, and pulled his fellow students out to safety. Meanwhile, Caleb searched the coach for his fellow students. They had rescued more than a dozen students by the time emergency personnel arrived on scene. Michael then assisted one of the injured students to a telephone so she could notify her parents.

Mr. President, the actions of these two young men may have prevented the other students from suffering additional injury or even death. Their reaction during this unexpected and disorienting event was truly commendable, as was the response by local, state, and Federal emergency personnel, Amtrak, and the Red Cross.

It is unfortunate that the Nation's awareness of the dangers of road/railway crossings tends to be raised by tragedies such as this, only to fade as time passes. Drivers who fail to heed rail intersection warnings place not only themselves at risk, but others as well. More needs to be done to prevent such accidents. I intend to work with my colleagues this year to do just that.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:25 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hayes, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 774. An act to amend the Small Business Act to change the conditions of participation and provide an authorization of appropriations for the women's business center program.

H.R. 807. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide portability of service credit to persons who leave employment